

STAT

WASHINGTON STAR (GREEN LINE)  
7 JULY 1981ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE A-7

## Soviet Arms Control View Frustrates U.S. Officials

By Henry S. Bradsher  
Washington Star Staff Writer

The Reagan administration's first direct talks with the Soviet Union on arms control have proven frustrating because of a pre-emptory Soviet rejection of questions about possible violations of a 1972 treaty, administration officials say.

The talks have been held in Geneva since May 22 by the two nations' standing consultative commission on the working of arms control agreements.

Although this round of the commission's regular sessions has about run its normal course, the administration is preparing to recall its negotiators in a mood of displeasure over the results, according to officials supervising arms control affairs here.

The negotiators questioned Soviet representatives about activities which might have been interpreted as violations of the treaty limiting anti-ballistic missile systems. Since signing the ABM treaty nine years ago, the Soviet Union has kept up an intensive research program on ways to intercept intercontinental missiles, and some of this research has raised questions repeatedly over the years about violations.

According to officials familiar with the commission's proceedings, the Soviets took a brusque or even hostile attitude toward the questioning. They bluntly denied any violations without providing explanations.

But in private conversation with U.S. representatives, the Soviets pointed out that the treaty contained a number of loopholes in its wording. These loopholes made it possible for them to take the position that practices which were supposed to be barred by the spirit of the treaty were not in fact prohibited by the letter of it.

This attitude came as no surprise to those who have dealt with the Soviets earlier in commission sessions. But it represented something of a setback for the new administration's determination to take a tougher line with Moscow on arms control.

The transition team for the Reagan administration brought into the government's arms control machinery several persons who had long been publicly skeptical about Soviet adherence to the ABM treaty and the 1972 strategic arms limitations treaty, SALT I, as well as being opposed to some terms of the unratified SALT II treaty.

One of these, David S. Sullivan, a consultant at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency who was involved in preparing for the regular scheduled meeting early this year of the standing consultative commission. Sullivan, a former CIA official, has argued that the Soviets have been guilty of a number of violations.

The commission session was delayed at U.S. request while new officials argued over how to handle it. Some wanted to use intelligence data to charge the Soviets directly with having violated arms control agreements. Others, supported by career men who had long wrestled with the issues, urged more caution because of treaty ambiguities.

There was also a question of which treaties to take up at the commission meeting. The ABM treaty has no termination date, so it is still unquestionably in effect. But SALT I technically expired in 1977, and SALT II has been in a legal limbo since the Carter administration called for a halt to Senate ratification procedures.

The administration decided to deal primarily with ABM questions at the Geneva meeting in order to avoid focusing on the continuing legality of SALT I. And, after some reportedly tough infighting, it decided to sharpen some old questions about possible Soviet violations rather than to accuse the Soviets of having committed violations.

Questions raised after the meetings began seven weeks ago included Soviet testing of surface-to-air missiles in what U.S. intelligence indicated might have been a prohibited "ABM mode," deployment of radars possibly "constructed and deployed for an ABM role," and development of a rapidly deployable and mobile ABM system. Some SALT I questions were also raised.

None of these was new. A former U.S. representative on the committee, Robert W. Buchheim, said in April that earlier discussion of them by the commission had never produced a clear result.

Soviet representatives, uncertain how much data the United States intelligence system had been able to collect, sometimes argued that electronic monitoring had been misinterpreted, Buchheim said. At other times they simply denied the accuracy of information presented to them.

New officials sought this spring to be more specific about questioning the Soviets on these points. And they added a new series of questions. It dealt with Soviet testing of radar "in an ABM mode," a subject often discussed in the U.S. press on the basis of official leaks here but never before put directly to Soviet representatives.